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There's an epic scene in The Wolf of Wall Street where Jordan Belfort's empire crumbles.

The FBI storms in, and the game is over. No negotiation. No escape.

I kid you not... I once worked for a company where the same thing happened.

A surprise raid.

People were shredding evidence. Others have panic attacks.

What followed was a massive lawsuit.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) sued the investment advice company for deceiving consumers with false claims about their services.

The FTC alleged that they charged consumers thousands of dollars for access to services that often resulted in substantial losses.

- The company paid **\$1.7 million** to consumers.
- The FTC also sent **\$1.2 million in refunds** to consumers.

And here's where I tell you how much I fucking hate marketers.

If you think Wall Street is evil, step into the world of online marketing—where fraudsters wear Rolexes, fake ‘gurus’ charge \$5K for a Zoom call, and convicted criminals are keynote speakers.

I’ve never seen a demographic of people who would sell their souls to make a quick buck faster.

I’m convinced that the world of direct-response marketing is filled with sociopaths.

The entire industry is shady as fuck.

Filled with charlatans and frauds.

I’ve taken to looking up my clients on [TruthFinder.com](https://truthfinder.com) to see if they have a criminal record.

I had one client — a very well-known, well-respected guy.

I discovered he’s been fined \$300,000 by the FTC for false advertising.

That guy was a whole ass criminal. Yet, he’s doing keynote speeches at marketing conferences, and everybody worships him like a God.

FILLED.

Gary Halbert is considered one of the best copywriters of all time. What a fascinating human being. He wrote his book on how to write copy **FROM**

PRISON.

Most copywriters worship this man.

To me, he most resembled a kingpin. He was a playboy. And off his rocker like Jordan Belfort.

He once said that he was on a plane looking down at the houses — and one out of every three houses he could see below had received his ads.

He became incredibly wealthy and lost it even faster. Gary was the master of selling you a fantasy, so he ended up in prison for a year.

Again, he got busted for fraud.

People asked me to write a promotion for a Crypto info product...

While they were getting slaughtered in the market.

One guy had a whole episode of Unsolved Mysteries dedicated to him.

Because there's widespread suspicion that he murdered his copywriter — pushed him off the top of a building.

This is how crooked some of these people are.

Yet, these people walk among us as if they're normal human beings.

I've gone back and forth on what to make of the people in the online marketing world.

Are they all fraudsters or doing real good in the world?

That's a question I asked myself about Tony Robbins A LOT. And I still go back and forth. I'll eventually make a whole post about Tony's shadiness.

There was this guy, Brett.

My former boss.

One of the scammiest people ever.

Every day, we'd start the day with a team meeting. Bret had a very inflated ego.

I've seen Brett publicly humiliate more than a few people with glee.

Brett fancied himself to be above the rules. Rules are for the little people. He was on the call chewing tobacco — I kid you not — spitting it out into a spittoon.

What is the **yippy kay yay** is this?

Disgusting.

Nobody commented on it, but that alone tells you everything you need to know about Brett.

After the FTC raid the previous year, Brett came from another company to run the show.

The Feds had also busted the company he'd come from — Raging Bull. And they got shut down permanently.

Brett considered himself a marketing genius, yet ironically, he had a knack for running businesses into the ground.

This one was no different.

There was another client in the same industry. He flies me down to Florida to meet at the company headquarters for a few days.

It's a tiny office—much smaller than I expected for an investment guru. There are about eight people in the whole company.

I meet the phone sales team—two guys. We went out for drinks, and they told me about the job.

“Hey,” I say, “What was all that yelling I heard from your office? You must have had an irate customer.”

“Oh nah.” He said, “You ain’t seen nothing yet. This is me every day. When I’m yelling, that’s right where I want to be. That means emotions are flying...”

“If we’re having a screaming match, I’m doing my job.”

This guy felt no qualms about berating people into buying his overpriced product.

No qualms about using every shady and manipulative tactic in the book to bully his way to closing the sale.

On the contrary — he was proud of himself.

How did I arrive here?

I was a LONG way from home.

I kept trying to climb the corporate ladder and followed the money.

I heard that the investing advice industry paid the best, so that's where I went. They spent the best because it was the most cutthroat and competitive industry online today.

So, the best copywriters in the world often are in this industry.

It was a long and windy road.

I flew to Nebraska to hire an A-list copywriter to train me for a few days, show me the ropes, and teach me how the game is played.

The Corn Belt.

It was the type of place I vowed never to return to.

The place is so landlocked, just being there felt stifling.

For what it's worth, I don't regret my work.

I was a good copywriter before I got into the industry.

After a few years, I became an outstanding copywriter.

When I arrived at Tony Robbins ' company, I was ready to knock everyone's socks off.

It took me a very long time to understand these people. I spent years lost in a grey area.

One of the things I learned...

The reason why these people felt no qualms about selling their BS products for thousands of dollars...

Late-stage Capitalism Corrupted Them Entirely.

They believed that because their products were selling like hotcakes... this automatically implied that their actions were ethically acceptable.

There are A LOT of people like this. ***Look at me. Look at how much money I made online. Look at me bragging about how much money I make on the internet.***

Somehow, the idea is... If we made lots of money, that's all the proof we need to sleep easy at night.

I've taken a long time to clarify my thoughts about the people in this industry. What I respect about them, and what I don't.

I've indeed encountered a wide range of slime bags in my industry...

I used to feel ashamed telling people what I did for a living.

Part of me knew before I was ready to admit it to myself.

But... Everything is relative.

I reasoned that while it is true that I've had to work for and with several ethically compromised people...

In the grander scheme of this late-stage capitalist hellscape, many companies have shady business practices.

In addition to the **Fake Gurus...** there are **Payday loans, Multilevel Marketing, automated phone call scams, get-rich-quick schemes, Forex and Bitcoin schemes, Ponzi schemes, Snake Oil Products...**, and **timeshares.**

Oh, Timeshares are the worst.

Have you ever heard of the Liver King?



Here's this guy making millions of dollars on the internet selling garbage supplements.

He looks like a Greek statue well into his forties.

People think he looks like that because he eats raw meat and all sorts of nasty shit like bull testicles and whatnot.

Eventually, people find out he's spending \$12,000 per month on steroids.



I ultimately came to a place where I felt comfortable.

The Fake Guru industry is not the only scammy industry. This is a feature of late-stage capitalism, not a bug.

And, hell, some people in this country make bombs for a living. Fly drones that kill people for a living.

It makes my industry look petty by comparison.

For however long I stay in this industry, I still enjoy my work. I was meant to be a powerful communicator.

I acquired this skill through the most unconventional means.

But I have no regrets.

Brett eventually got fired after it came to light that he'd been stealing from the company.

Unfortunately, he stole A LOT.

So much so that they shut their doors for good about a year after I left.

Brett fired me when I was out on my ass, burned out, in the middle of a nasty divorce.

I think it's so funny how they kicked me out.

Treated me like dirt.

Like I wasn't worthy of being among them anymore.

It threw me out like trash because I was having a hard time...

Walking away from that, I find it easy to beat myself and think I failed. I'm a failure.

Yet, these same companies are going belly up barely a year later because everyone in it is too crooked.

Stay woke, ya'll.

Until next time,

Anton Volney

Dancer, Writer, Buddhist



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